

Pine Ridge Ranger District

JUNIOR RANGER ACTIVITY BOOK



This book belongs to:



Pine Ridge Ranger District
Nebraska National Forest and
Oglala National Grassland
125 North Main Street
Chadron, NE 69337
(308) 432-0300



WELCOME TO THE NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS!

Frank Winter Hawk



Súnkawakhán

My name's Frank Winter Hawk, and my trusty
friend Súnkawakhán is an American Paint Horse!

We're here to show you around and help you become a Pine Ridge Junior Ranger. All you'll need is your field notebook (*that's this!*), a good pair of shoes, and a little imagination!

Do your best to complete **all the activities** in this book. When you're finished, bring it to a US Forest Service office to get your certificate signed. Then you are officially a Pine Ridge Junior Ranger!

Come on, let's get started!

This is a land to be cherished.



I am honored to work in conservation for the US Forest Service at the Pine Ridge Ranger District in Nebraska. I will continue to take care of this land, just like my ancestors did.



My people, the Lakota, lived on these lands long before the U.S. Forest Service even existed. Lakota people live near this area today.

Frank is wearing clothing called “regalia.” He is sporting fancy dance regalia considered contemporary by native people.



What's Wojapi?

Wojapi is a traditional Lakota dish made with berries that grow on the Great Plains. It is a thick berry sauce, similar to a pudding.

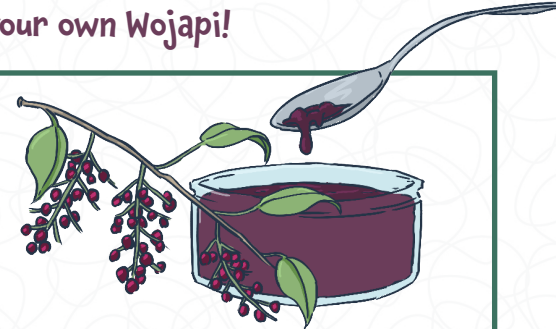
Wojapi has been made by Native American tribes for centuries. Recipes are passed down through generations for everyone to enjoy.

Make your own Wojapi!

4-5 cups chokecherries, preferably growing wild. Can also use blueberries or plums.

½ cup water

honey



For many Native American tribes, chokecherries were the most important fruit in their diets.

1. Place the berries and water into a large saucepan and bring to a boil.
2. Lower heat to a simmer and cook for an additional hour, stirring regularly until thickened.
3. Taste and see if honey is needed for sweetness. Add just a little at a time. Stir gently to combine.
4. Try it on top of ice cream or on waffles for an irresistible topping. It also makes a good steak sauce!

How to find chokecherries:

Choke cherries grow throughout the Pine Ridge District. They are common on north facing slopes. They thrive in areas after fires or where other disturbances occur.

Look for them on Forest Service Road 723 leading to the Cliffs Trailhead. This is a great place to hike and explore!

The best time to harvest them is around the summer solstice like the Lakota.

Look up at the night sky.

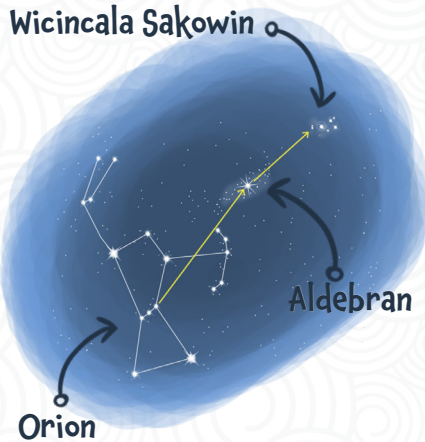
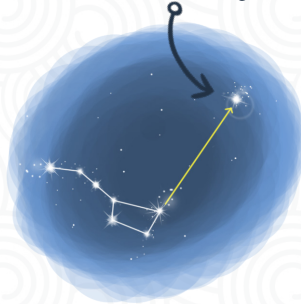
Notice when you're far away from city lights, you can see so many stars in the night sky.

The stars provided lots of information to the Lakota. They used the stars to navigate the landscape and to track the changing seasons throughout the year.

The star that doesn't move.

The north star, also known as Polaris or Wichapi Owanjila by the Lakota, is very important when navigating using the night sky. Wichapi Owanjila translates to "star that always stands in one place." You can use the Big Dipper to find the north star. Draw a line between the two outermost stars in the bowl of the Big Dipper. That line leads straight to Wichapi Owanjila.

Wichapi Owanjila



Stories in the stars.

The Lakota told many stories with the stars. One story told the tale of seven little girls. Wicincala Sakowin (Seven Little Girls) were placed in the sky by Fallen Star, a Lakota protector, to remind the people to take care of children. Wicincala Sakowin is also known as the Pleiades constellation.

Now look up and see if you can find Wichapi Owanjila and Wicincala Sakowin in the night sky. Draw a checkmark in the box when you find them!

☐ Wichapi Owanjila

☐ Wicincala Sakowin

Best places to see the stars?

The Roberts Tract Camping Area is a great place to view the sparkling night skies. You can explore 20 miles of trails from this campground.

Other great night sky viewing locations include Toadstool Geologic Park and Soldier Creek Wilderness Area.

Storytelling helps us remember and preserve our past.

Tell one of your own stories!



My perfect camping trip would be in the...

(Season)

I'd be sure to bring my...

(Favorite Camping Item)

We'd spend the day...

(Nature Activity)

We would go exploring in the...

(Place)

I'd share my tent with...

(Closest Buddies)

We would eat lots of...

(Food)

After dinner there'd be...

(Activity)

And once we've had enough, we'd pack up and head back to...

(Home)

Be sure to check out some of the hiking and biking trails in the National Grasslands and Forests for even more stories to tell!



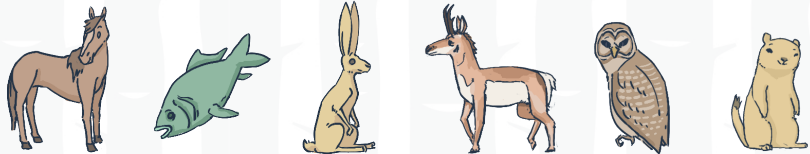
Learn some of the Lakota Language

1 2 3 4 5 6

Wanji Núnpa Yámni Tópa Záptan Sákpe



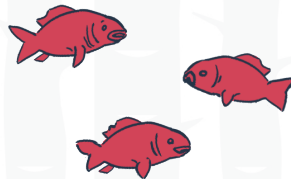
Sa Gi Zisa Zi To Shatho



Súnkawakhán Hogan Mastinca Tahheencha Hihhan Pispíza

Historically, the Lakota language was only spoken, relying on rich oral traditions to preserve their legends and stories. The Lakota also recorded these stories in drawings and paintings. The language was first put into written form by missionaries around 1840.

Use the Lakota vocabulary to write sentences describing the pictures below.



It's rough out there!

Draw a line across to match the problem with its solution.



Warmth



Fruits / Fiber



Injury treatment



Meat / Protein



Shelter from The Elements



Chokecherry



Bison



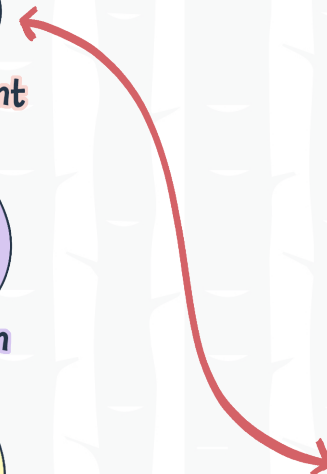
Pyrite



Cave



Echinacea



Horsin' around.

Horses became very important to the Lakota because they were nomadic. Lakota people moved their villages to places with good grass, water and nearby bison herds. Horses made it much easier for them to move. They also used horses for hunting.



Soldier Creek Wilderness is a great area for horseback riding. The trails and campground at Soldier Creek offer easy access to the beautiful wilderness, cherished homelands to the Lakota.

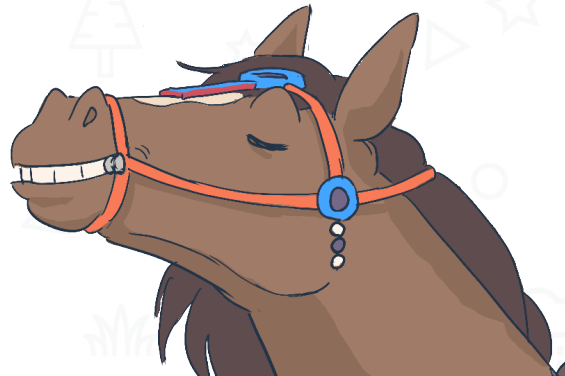
The recreational trails we ride on today were once hunting and migration trails used by the Lakota people. Because of this, you might find cultural items, such as arrowheads, that were left behind long ago. If you find anything like this, please leave them where you find them and tell a ranger.

Removing arrowheads and other artifacts from Public lands or Reservations is illegal.

Lakota people love and cherish their horses. Do you have a pet or an animal that you feel connected to?

If you could be any animal what animal would you be and why?

"Súŋkawakháŋ" translates to "sacred dog" in Lakota.



So many landscapes, so little time!

The Pine Ridge Ranger District contains a wide range of different landscapes like forested ridges, mixed-grass prairie, badlands, and river valleys. You can hike, bike, camp, hunt, fish, and so much more!

Toadstool Geologic Park, Soldier Creek Wilderness, Pine Ridge National Recreation Area, and Hudson-Meng Bison Bonebed all offer recreation opportunities for you to have fun, care for the land, and learn more about these places.

Draw a picture of your favorite place at the Great Plains.



Frank loves the wide-open spaces of the National Grassland because he and Súŋkawakháŋ can ride really fast!

Wow, that was a lot of hard work!

Now that you've finished, bring this booklet to a U.S. Forest Service office front desk during regular hours and a ranger will sign your certificate.



Certificate of Achievement



awarded to

_____ for successful completion of all of the required activities to be a

Pine Ridge Junior Ranger

Ranger Signature

Date

congrats!

